



Neighborhood Council
Funding Program
COMMERCIAL PREPAID CARD SYSTEM

ACCEPTABLE PURCHASE CATEGORIES

The Commercial Prepaid Card System was developed for Neighborhood Councils as an easy and convenient way to obtain items and/or services required for Neighborhood Council operations. The card has been electronically coded to accept a wide variety of purchases and includes valuable information provided to the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment by Neighborhood Councils.

Below is a list of acceptable purchase categories with Neighborhood Council funds, including the card. This list will change as Neighborhood Councils need changes. Certain items require advance approval from the Department. NOTE: Gasoline may be purchased *in reasonable amounts* for Neighborhood Council business by using your petty cash fund. Make sure a receipt is obtained from the gas station. Forward the original receipt to the Department with your other receipts for audit purposes.

If you have any questions regarding any of the items on the list, please contact the Funding Program at (866) LA HELPS.

ACCEPTABLE COMMERCIAL PREPAID CARD PURCHASE CATEGORIES:

BUSINESS SERVICES

- Automobile Parking Lots and Garages
- Employment Agencies, Temporary Help Services**
- Equipment Rental
- Furniture Rental
- Photographic Developing, Photofinishing Laboratories, Studios
- Postal Services
- Quick Copy, Reproduction and Blueprint Services
- Stenographic and Secretarial Support Services**
- Tool Rental

COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

- Telecommunication Equipment
- Telecommunication Service

FINANCIAL SERVICES

- Automated Cash

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- Associations, Civic, Social and Fraternal
- Colleges, Universities, Professional Schools
- Organizations, Charitable and Social Service
- Schools, Elementary and Secondary

REPAIR SERVICES

- Electronic Repair Shops
- Furniture Repair, Refinishing and Reupholstery Shops
- Small Appliance Repair Shops

RETAIL SERVICES

- Books, Periodicals, Newspapers
- Building Materials, Lumber Stores
- Candy, Nut, Confectionery Stores
- Caterers
- Computers, Computer Peripheral Equipment, Computer Software
- Computer Software Stores
- Department Stores
- Discount Stores
- Drug Stores, Pharmacies
- Eating Places, Restaurants
- Electronics Stores
- Fast Food Quick Payment Service Restaurants
- Florist Supplies, Nursery Stock and Flowers
- Glass, Paint, Wallpaper Stores
- Grocery Stores, Supermarkets
- Hardware Stores
- Home Supply Warehouse
- Lawn and Garden Supply Stores
- Music Stores
- Office and Commercial Furniture
- Office, Photographic and Photocopy
- Paints, Varnishes and Supplies
- Record Shops
- Second Hand Stores, Used Merchandise Stores
- Stationery, Office Supplies, Printing
- Variety Stores
- Wholesale Clubs

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

- Bus Lines
- Courier Services, both Air and Ground
- Freight Forwarders
- Truck and Utility Trailer Rental

****NOTE: Requires approval in advance from the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment.**

Neighborhood Council
Funding Program**UNACCEPTABLE PURCHASES**

Below is a list of unacceptable purchases using City funds, including both the Commercial Prepaid Card and paper checks. *It is the responsibility of the Neighborhood Council to obtain prior approval on all questionable items that are not listed here or on the Acceptable Purchase Categories list.*

If you have any questions, please contact your Project Coordinator or the Neighborhood Council Funding Program, toll-free, at (866) LA HELPS.

The Department of Neighborhood Empowerment has created the Funding Program based on a good faith relationship with the Neighborhood Councils. It is assumed that Neighborhood Council purchases will reflect this assumption of good faith and will adhere to the prohibitions described below. To assist the Neighborhood Councils, the Department retains fiscal controls to minimize mistakes or monetary abuses by the Neighborhood Councils. The Department is able to monitor Neighborhood Council purchases through real-time online access to the Bank of America and the City Financial Management Information System (FMIS) databases and reports. If fiscal mistakes or abuses occur, the Department may use a sanction process to correct the situation.

UNACCEPTABLE PURCHASE CATEGORIES AND ITEMS

- **Any purchases made without the authorization of the Neighborhood Council governing body, and any purchases that are not identified by category in the approved budget or spending plan of the Neighborhood Council**
- **Transactions completed without obtaining an original invoice, receipt, written quote, or written estimate**
- **All costs or expenses incurred prior to the date of enrollment in the Funding Program**
- **Renting or leasing of office space without prior approval of the Department** (*This is a contracting issue that requires adherence to specific guidelines*)
- **Long-term contract in excess of 12 months or one full funding cycle without approval of the General Manager and City Attorney** (*contracts require adherence to specific guidelines because of liability concerns*)
- **Gifts, grants, and donations of money or goods to individuals or groups without a clearly identified and tangible benefit to the Neighborhood Council, and without a receipt from the recipient individuals or groups.** (*State law prohibits public funds from being given as a gift; contact your Project Coordinator or the Funding Program for more information*)
- **Gift Cards, Flowers to Neighborhood Council members or any other individual or group** (*State law prohibits public funds from being given as a gift*)
- **Airfare and any other travel expenses including hotel/motel facility expenses without prior Department approval.** (*The City Controller must approve all travel-related expenses for City departments, and the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment must approve travel by Neighborhood Councils, in advance*)
- **Alcohol, tobacco, firearms, and adult entertainment products** (*this should be obvious*)
- **Funding to third party individuals or groups without either an approved contract for goods or services or a receipt from a vendor for goods or services received** (*There must always be a closed transaction with either a contract or receipt acknowledging the funds the Neighborhood Council is spending. There cannot be a third party intermediary that receives Neighborhood Council funds without written acknowledgment for the Neighborhood Council and Department records*)
- **Hiring staff or securing the services of temporary employees, except through an approved contract between the Department and PDQ Temporary Services, Inc., a City-approved temporary employment agency** (*This is a contract that requires adherence to specific guidelines*)
- **Retaining janitorial, custodial, security, or any other professional services without an approved contract for services** (*This is a contracting issue that requires adherence to specific guidelines*)
- **Supporting or opposing ballot measures or candidates, filing lawsuits against the City or City agency, filing appeals against any discretionary decisions made by any City agency, political forums or debates, unless following City Attorney guidelines**